

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

MBCB approves record budget for 2003

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), meeting in the Baptist Building in Jackson on the afternoon of August 27, approved a proposed record Cooperative Program budget for 2003 and authorized negotiations for the purchase of property adjacent to Camp Garaywa in Clinton.

The proposed 2003 CP budget of \$31,592,787 is a 3.51% increase over the record 2002 CP budget of \$30,522,692, currently in effect. The portion of the proposed 2003 CP budget dedicated to Southern Baptist Convention causes remains steady at 35%, for a total contribution of \$11,057,475. That figure amounts to a 3.51% increase.

MBCB programs will receive 37.35%, or \$11,798,703. That figure is a 4.03% increase. Mississippi Baptist institutions and agencies will receive 24.55% of the proposed 2003 CP budget, for a total of \$7,756,609 — a 3.17% increase.

The proposed 2003 CP budget also contains a \$980,000 contribution to the church annuity program under the category of Shared Responsibilities MBC Matching Portion. While that figure is 3.1% of the proposed budget, it represents no increase over the 2002 CP budget.

The final adoption of the proposed CP budget for 2003 will take place at the 2002 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention on October 29-30 at First Church, Jackson.



McLaughlin

The board also authorized executive director-treasurer Jim Futral to negotiate with the owners for the possible purchase of approximately 28 acres of undeveloped land adjacent to Camp Garaywa, the state Girls in Action campground in Clinton.

Funding for the purchase would come from the board's Operating Fund, and title would be held in the name of the board.

Convention board members also heard from the chairmen of the board's 11 committees and from the presidents of Mississippi's three Baptist

institutions of higher learning: Bettye Coward of Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain, Larry Kennedy of William Carey College in Hattiesburg, and Lee Royce of Mississippi College in Clinton.

The MBCB executive committee, meeting in the Baptist Building on the afternoon of August 26 and the morning of August 27, approved the reassignments of two Baptist Student Union (BSU) employees.

Tom McLaughlin, longtime BSU director at Mississippi Community College in Moorhead, will become BSU director at Northwest Mississippi Community College in Senatobia, effective January 1.

Liz Thurmond, BSU director at Hinds Community College in Raymond, on July 15 assumed the associate director's position for the BSU at the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

The executive committee also approved new board members to fill unexpired terms:

• Rex Ard, pastor of Banner Church, Bruce, to fill the unexpired Calhoun Association term

of Darryl Turner, former pastor of Bethany Church, Calhoun City, who moved to Tennessee.

• James Copeland, member of Liberty Church, Liberty, to fill the unexpired Mississippi Association term of Martin Hayden, former pastor of Liberty Church, Liberty, who accepted the call to pastor Mt. Zion Church in Northwest Association.

• David Meadors, pastor of First Church, Marks, to fill the unexpired North Delta Association term of Ben James, former pastor of Crowder Church, Crowder, who accepted the call to pastor Utica Church, Utica.

• Charles Maples, pastor of Concord Church, Macon, to fill the unexpired Noxubee Association term of Darren Chester, former pastor of Shuqualak Church, Shuqualak, who accepted a military chaplainship in South Carolina.

• Wesley Nicholas, pastor of Hopewell Church, Oxford, to fill the unexpired Yalobusha Association term of David Sapp, former pastor of Sylva Rena Church, Water Valley, who moved to Atlanta.



Thurmond

Well-known pair to take on church planting roles

JACKSON, Miss. (Special) — The executive committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) on August 27 approved a pair of familiar faces to take on a daunting challenge — planting new churches in a state that already has more than 2,100 churches.

Bill Duncan, associational missions director (AMD) for Golden Triangle Association in Columbus, and Ernest Sadler, AMD for Jackson Association in Pascagoula, plan to retire from their longtime posts and begin their new part-time jobs on October 1 as church planting strategists.

Funding for the new positions is being provided on an annual basis by the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, headquartered in Atlanta. The actual new church plants will be funded through the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering.

Ed Deuschle, MBCB director of church planting, will supervise the work of Duncan and Sadler. "Their role will be to educate and acclimatize Mississippi Baptists as to why we need to be in the church planting business," he said.

Deuschle pointed out that Mississippi Baptists live in a state where two million people out of a total population of 2.8 million are unsaved. "They (Duncan and Sadler) are going to work to create an aware-

ness that if we are to reach Mississippi and the world for Jesus, there have to be churches willing to 'multiply' themselves — to plant churches where the need exists."

Duncan and Sadler will be a part of the MBCB missions strategy division, headed by associate executive director David Michel.

"We believe the greatest obstacle to church growth in Mississippi is the misperception that we already have enough, or even too many churches. Our new church planting strategists will help build a climate for church growth, identify new people groups to be reached, and encourage existing churches to partner together for reaching our neighbors more effectively," Michel said.

"We will need the prayers and cooperation of our fellow Mississippi Baptists to reach the goals and meet the needs of new church plants. I am happy with the call," Duncan said.

"This is an exciting time as I explore yet another avenue of ministry in Southern Baptist life. After spending 29 years as a pastor and another 14 years in associational ministry, it is a joy to broaden my service to an even greater segment of

Mississippi Baptist life," Sadler said.

Deuschle said Duncan and Sadler can be reached at the MBCB Church Planting Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3361. E-mail: esmith@mbcb.org.

"They are available to speak to AMD groups, key churches, pastors' conferences, and any other organization that wants to learn more about the church planting movement," Deuschle said.



Sadler (left) and Duncan

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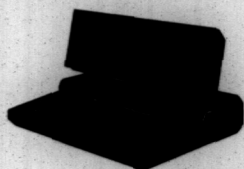
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Our bloody hands

If you're not losing sleep at night, you should be. After all, the blood of five innocent children is on your hands. It is on all our hands.

Study carefully their names and ages: Joslyn Miller, age seven, and her brother Kenneth Miller, age 11; Jorian Holloway, age 11, and his sisters, Ashley Bradley, age nine, and Alexis Bradley, age seven.

They were all slaughtered on August 24 at the intersection of Ratliff Ferry Road and the Natchez Trace in Madison County, when a young Canton man who law enforcement officials say was more than two-and-a-half times over the legal limit for a drunk driving charge, allegedly ran the stop sign at the intersection and plowed into the 2001 Chrysler Sebring being driven by the Miller children's mother, Lisa, age 34.

Miller's barely-recognizable car was hit with such intensity that it was thrown into a grove of trees, ejecting the children along the way. Emergency responders sobbed openly as they collected the children's broken, lifeless bodies. There was no hope; they were all dead at the scene.

Lisa Miller survived and was discharged from the hospital in time to attend her children's funeral. The accused drunk driver, David Lee Lawrence, age 23, is still hospitalized but expected to recover.

When he does, he will face four counts of culpable negligence, one count of aggravated assault, and one count of DUI homicide. Maximum sentences for convictions on all charges would bring 100 years of imprisonment.

"We have no interest in Lawrence's attorney making any recommendations for a lighter sentence in exchange for a plea from Lawrence," said Madison County District Attorney Rick Mitchell.

In case you've lost count, that's five young lives snuffed out, two devastated families robbed of all their children, and one young adult whose life is in ruins.

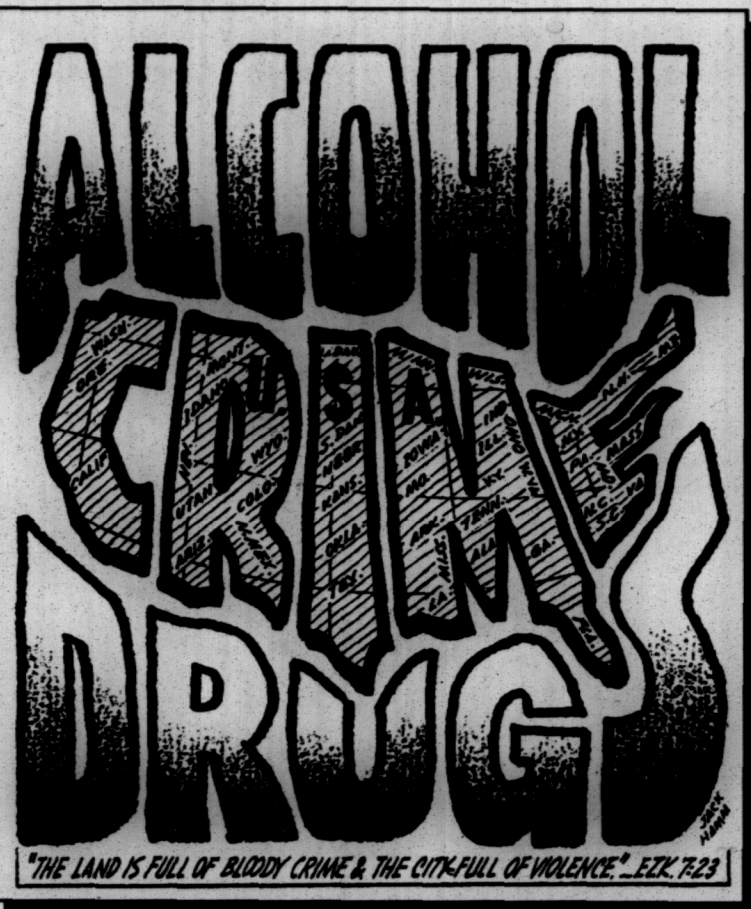
All for the love of alcohol. Yes, Lawrence is responsible for his actions. Mitchell said Lawrence had been partying on a boat before the wreck, and appeals from friends not to drive went unheeded. If convicted, he will pay a heavy price.

However, you and I put the bottle in his hands. We enabled him. How? Because every drop of liquor that comes into Mississippi is sold on our behalf, with our approval through referenda and elected officials, for the purposes of collecting taxes and making a profit on top of the taxes.

That's right. The Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) division of the Mississippi Tax Commission — a state agency — purchases all the liquor wholesale that comes into Mississippi and then distributes it to retail liquor stores. The state realizes a nifty profit on every bottle sold and also collects exorbitant taxes.

All of this is done in our names by our state government with our approval. In a republic, the people are the state and the actions of the state put the blood of those children on our hands.

By the way — did you know that no matter how many people a drunk driver kills in Mississippi, only one count of DUI homicide per accident can be filed? It's state law. It's why Lawrence is charged with only one count of DUI homicide, even

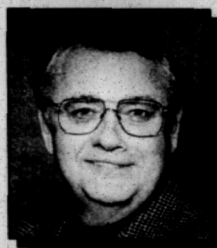


though he is allegedly responsible for the deaths of five people. This is yet another indication of how we in Mississippi protect the interests of the drunk driver at the expense of victims.

Don't try washing the blood from your hands. It won't come off, at least as long as we avert our eyes from such tragedies in the interest of promoting lower taxes. The only way to get it off is to do the right thing and banish alcohol from Mississippi.

That may seem like a crazy, hopeless idea to some people, but in memory of Joslyn, Kenneth, Jorian, Ashley, and Alexis, isn't it worth a try?

GUEST OPINION:



A Matter of Values

By Larry Garner,
Director of Church Services
Metro Association, Jackson

A Good Trap Needs Good Bait

Expensive casinos are not built for the public's good and entertainment. All talk about entertainment is a smoke-screen. They do want the people who come to be entertained — to stay longer, to gamble more, to lose more. That's what the shows, the food, the child-care, the theme parks, the golf courses, the salons, and spas are all about. That's why restaurants, hotels, and convention halls are connected to casinos. Operators do not want gamblers leaving the facility for anything. If gamblers leave, the casinos lose — and they are not in the habit of losing.

The operators have actually raised the taking of money from a science to an art form. For traps to be effective, they must be enticing. One

Vicksburg casino advertised that it will give gamblers \$100 to switch from other casinos. It's good bait because they will get it back. It will just take a few minutes more but what's time, especially in a casino? Casinos have no clocks. They want gamblers to forget about time. The more time gamblers spend in the casino, the more money they lose.

Even lighting receives attention. "In fact, bright and dramatic lighting is one of the most integral components of a casino's overall design. That's because, when used properly, lighting makes customers feel comfortable and keeps them on the floor playing longer," according to Neil Komai of lighting manufacturer, Tivoli Industries, Inc.

Gambling cartels have recently backed research into the sense of smell and the

powerful influence scents have on behavior. The investment indicates the interest of the operators in control and manipulation factors. The reason the gambling sector is so interested in this and other behavioral factors is that they want to use these as manipulators in their operations.

After all, a good trap needs good bait.

A Matter of Values

Jesus gave the standard of conduct for moral behavior. One of the three priorities he lived by was the priority of persons over things — even "holy" things. He valued persons above things.

We live in a world that values things above persons. Gambling is a prime example of valuing money above persons. It really comes down to a matter of values.

September 15 will be observed as Anti-Gambling Sunday in the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention.

For more information on anti-gambling efforts in Mississippi, contact the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3329. E-mail: rwood@mbcb.org.

Relief effort raises awareness of So. Baptists

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP and local reports) — Within hours of the Sept. 11 attacks in New York and Washington, Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers were rolling — ready to cook meals for victims and recovery workers, care for children, and otherwise do the jobs they had done so many times before.

Mississippi Baptist disaster relief workers were among the first to respond, thanks to funding from the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering.

By the time those emergency efforts finally con-

cluded in late July, the response had shaped the entire Southern Baptist disaster relief network more than any single response since Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

There were new areas of ministry that demonstrated the importance of flexibility, including an expanded chaplaincy response, opportunities for cleaning up apartments, and even impromptu efforts like distribution of teddy bears that flooded the city as expressions of love and support from around the world.

The biggest long-term impact, however, has come from the new awareness of disaster relief efforts among both Southern Baptists and the nation at large.

"There has been a significant increase in the number of people volunteering for training," said Mickey Caison, national coordinator of Southern Baptist

such as communications units, shower units, and even a laundry unit to keep volunteers supplied with clean clothes.

Later the mobile kitchen efforts were consolidated with Salvation Army operations, with Southern Baptists partnering to supply volunteers.

Childcare units also set up stations in relief centers, allowing victims and their families to file paperwork knowing that their children were being lovingly cared for.

Chaplains were mobilized not only to care for the stressed recovery workers, but also just to mingle with grieving crowds surrounding

impromptu memorials that sprung up around Manhattan.

Later, some of the largest public response came when Southern Baptists used their experience in cleaning out homes to offer a cleaning service for apartments in the immediate area, with 643 apartments cleaned. Mississippi Baptists were among the first to be involved in that ministry.

The final numbers signal the scale of the commitment. Volunteers from 32 state conventions participated, contributing 20,842 volunteer days, defined as one volunteer working one day. A total of nearly 1.29 million meals were prepared, and 842 children were served in childcare centers.

The public exposure of the disaster relief efforts will make future ministry even more effective, Caison said.

Relationships with the city have been formed that will enable more ministry opportunities in the future, including efforts surrounding the New Hope New York Strategic Focus Cities outreach effort that will bring thousands of volunteers

and other resources to the city over the next few years. "In New York people on the street would stop volunteers with yellow shirts and just thank them for coming," he said.

"It shows Southern Baptists as caring people, and that we do have a servant's heart. We are willing to get dirty to help people," he added. "You had churches and associations that were doing these things, but there was an opportunity with Washington and New York to be seen as more than just the little church on the corner."

Caison said the level of national exposure also has opened doors with many agencies and partners that had not existed previously. The network in the past has worked with the American Red Cross and the



HELPING OUT — Kay Cassibry (left), executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, and John Henry, (right) plan meal preparation with an unidentified Salvation Army worker during the Mississippians' assignment to the Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island June 5-13. (BR photo by Tony Martin)

disaster relief and adult volunteer mobilization coordinator for the North American Mission Board (NAMB).

"We usually have about 2,500 volunteers participating in training in a year, and this past year we saw about 5,000," he pointed out.

The 319-day response was the longest sustained emergency relief effort in the disaster relief network's history, eclipsing in duration even the massive response following Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

Mobile kitchen units operated by state conventions and associations provided the bulk of the response force in both New York and Washington, along with support structures

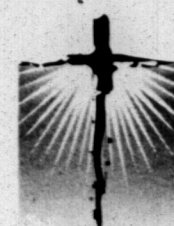
LifeWay best sellers

HARDBACK

1. Let's Roll, Lisa Beamer (Tyndale)
2. Jesus, The One and Only (Broadman & Holman, LifeWay's trade books arm)
3. Wild at Heart, John Eldredge (Nelson)
4. Bringing Up Boys, Dr. James Dobson (Tyndale)
5. Prisoners of Hope, Dayna Curry & Heather Mercer (Waterbrook)
6. When Godly People Do Ungodly Things, Beth Moore (B&H)
7. Praying God's Word, Beth Moore (B&H)
8. Traveling Light, Max Lucado (Nelson)
9. Paul Great Lives Vol. 6, Charles Swindoll (Nelson)
10. Prayer of Jabez for Women, Bruce Wilkinson (Multnomah)

PAPERBACK

1. Power of a Praying Woman, Stormie Omartian (Harvest House)
2. Power of a Praying Wife, Stormie Omartian (Harvest House)
3. Power of a Praying Husband, Stormie Omartian (Harvest House)
4. Power of a Praying Parent, Stormie Omartian (Harvest House)
5. Five Love Languages, Gary Chapman (Moody Press)
6. Praying God's Will for Your Life, Stormie Omartian (Nelson)
7. Power of a Positive Mom, Karol Ladd (Howard)
8. Case for Faith, Lee Strobel (Zondervan)
9. Case for Christ, Lee Strobel (Zondervan)
10. Humor for a Woman's Heart, Barbara Johnson et al. (Howard)



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FRONT PAGE

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Federal Emergency Management Agency primarily to provide feeding, with other areas of response usually coordinated through other channels.

"Increasingly with state and local governments we're going to be taking responsibility in other areas, such as cleanup and recovery and spiritual care responses," Caison said, noting discussions already are underway with state officials who contacted Southern Baptists directly to be involved in their comprehensive homeland security planning.

Caison said Sept. 11 has further solidified Southern Baptists' reputation as one of the top providers of volunteer disaster relief services in the country — opening doors for the message of Christ those volunteers bear.

"Sept. 11 provided validity for the type of ministry we do, that the ministry of serving Christ in the crisis was very real," he said, "and the physical things that we did gave us the opportunity to share the spiritual interests that we have."

Looking back

10 years ago

Less than one week after the plea is issued, more than 1,000 Southern Baptist volunteers join a force of 1,500 volunteers over Labor Day weekend to aid in recovery efforts to aid the victims of Hurricane Andrew.

20 years ago

A month-long U.S. Senate battle waged by "New Right" conservatives to take away the U.S. Supreme Court's authority to decide school prayer cases, fails after four unsuccessful efforts to end a filibuster against the measure.

50 years ago

B.B. McKinney, church music editor secretary of the Department of Music at the Sunday School Board and composer of more than 700 hymns, children's songs, and anthems, dies five days after an automobile accident.

REMEMBERING 9-11 AND 3,000 MORE

The remembrances of the terrorist attacks of one year ago have managed to bring all of the reality and many of the feelings that we experienced back to the surface. Since we first saw the planes fly into the towers and heard of the planes that went down in Pennsylvania and at the Pentagon, a year has passed and it has taken most of that time to compile the numbers representing those who died in the attack. Amazingly, the numbers vary from one account to another, but



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

friends went down, the number was 44. Add them up and the shock of what unfolded before us on September 11 begins to be understood, for over 3,000 people went to work that morning,

the war and rebuild our world. There would be what seemed like an endless procession of funerals and endless digging to try to recover those lost at Ground Zero. If the world stands another 99 years and America looks back on September 11, it is doubtful that even then the human toll will have been totally calculated. How many sons and daughters never returned home from that morning? How many fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, neighbors, and business associates never returned? Four planes and 19 terrorists took over 3,000 lives and threw a nation of over 300 million into shock, prayer, and high alert.

The theme that I have seen most often during these days of remembrances is, "We will not forget!" For those of us who lived through the experience, I doubt we will ever forget because I doubt that we can. It is now deeply etched into our national psyche where it will remain to harm us, chill us, thrill us, inspire, incite, and implore us all at the same time.

Another 3,000

For just a moment, would you walk with me and look at the painful destruction that took place in other places on that same day. On September 11, 2001, in the quiet, still setting of a courtroom, a family died by divorce decree. Actually, it was not just one family, but over 3,000 families died by divorce that day. The next day, on average, another 3,000+ homes ended. The next day, another 3,000. That's the way it occurs in America. Over the span of a year, right at 1.5 million families die as a result of divorce. That in itself involves three million people, not including the pain and uncertainty, and the trauma and tears of children, parents, grandparents, and friends. As with the national 9-11 tragedy, these tragedies mean that life will

never again be the same. Even sadder is the fact that we hardly even think about it. We raise no national army. We feel no sense of urgency to teach things differently, act differently, build our homes differently, or even pause to listen to the Creator of the home. It is as though we have made the destruction of family life a natural part of our life process, and everyone of us, with virtually no exclusions, gets involved in helping our friends and family members or maybe even ourselves, pick up and patch pieces most of our days on earth.

3,000 More

I really do not want to belabor the point, but would you at least take a moment to look at another 3,000? On the day of our national tragedy, the average number of abortions exceeded 3,000. As with divorce, this is an every day occurrence. If we agree that the numbers from the World Trade Center are staggering, let's take the time to add these staggering figures. It has been over 30 years since *Roe v. Wade* and well over a million children a year have been taken from their mother's womb and destroyed. This is one of the most incredible features of this wonderful nation — that we have created a court system that is so powerful that it can declare that a newly formed life, living and viable in its mother's womb, does not have a right to an existence simply because someone else decides that it should not live.

Thank God there are voices that speak up and speak out for these unborn, silent children. Thank God that at times there are steps, ever so small but positive steps, that reduce the number of abortions in Mississippi and across the land. Thank God that, from time to time, there seems to be a mental and sometimes spiritual breakthrough that brings an awareness and an awakening to America's consciousness that says, "This is not right!"

So it is that as we pause for a time of remembrance this week, we should remember the other 3,000, for while Ground Zero has not been repeated, the loss of our families and the loss of these precious little babies goes on, and on, and on.

Mims meets missions directors



Gene Mims (second from right), president of the Church Resources Division at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, was the keynote speaker September 6-7 for the annual Associational Missions Directors (AMD) Prayer Retreat at Camp Garaywa in Clinton. Mims, who spoke on his book entitled, *The Seven Churches Not In the Book of Revelation*, was greeted by (from left) Courtney Selvy, Panola Association AMD; Ken West, Washington Association AMD; and Billy Murphy, Lamar Association AMD. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

according to one account, they are about as close as we can get. Those who died at the World Trade Center: 2,881. That number included 344 police, firemen, and rescuers — the first responders to try to save as many as they could. At the Pentagon, the number of people killed in the attack was 189. In a wooded field in Pennsylvania where the plane on which Todd Beamer and his

leaving their homes with a kiss, or a wave, or a hug, never to return.

Within hours, our president announced that we were at war. Not only were our troops put on highest alert, but also they were ordered to go after terrorism wherever it might hide — whether in caves or castles around the world. Within days, money was appropriated to fight

Miss. CP takes dip

Mississippi Baptists gave \$2,235,661 in the month of August to the work of the Lord through the Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP), according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which disburses the CP funds. The August total was 23.62% less than the July total of \$2,926,882, and 14.38% below the \$2,611,073 given in August 2001. CP giving is up 2.27% for the fiscal year that runs January - December, but the record CP budget this year is a razor-thin 1.63% ahead of needs. To meet the 2002 CP budget, \$2,543,558 in gifts is needed each month. That figure was reached in January, April, May, and July, but not in the other months. The 2002 CP budget has been buoyed, however, by the all-time giving record in January (\$3,389,338) and a near-record in July (\$2,926,882). The total 2002 CP budget of \$30,522,692 was adopted by messengers to the 2001 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Mississippi CP helps fund such programs as See You at The Pole on September 18; the Baptist Nurses Fellowship meeting at Camp Garaywa in Clinton on September 20; and the Church Media Library State Conference at First Church, Kosciusko, on October 4.

SBC CP shows rise

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Gifts to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) in August were 9.64% above gifts for August 2001, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President and Chief Executive Officer Morris H. Chapman. Year-to-date support for CP Missions is 4.58% ahead of totals at this same point last year. August's \$15,983,549.68 in CP gifts to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America compared to \$14,578,070.02 in August 2001, a difference of \$1,405,479.66. Designated gifts of \$3,972,188.91 in August, meanwhile, were 30.99% below August's 2001's \$5,755,886.49, a decrease of \$1,783,697.58. In year-to-date CP giving, \$167,941,882.53 has been received, compared with \$160,592,711.06 in 2000-01, an increase of 4.58% or \$7,349,171.47. In year-to-date designated giving, \$166,978,452.98 has been received, compared with \$166,832,014.34, an increase of .09% or \$146,438.64. The SBC operates on an Oct. 1-Sept. 30 fiscal year. For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the August receipts of \$15,983,549.68 were 107.57% of the budgeted \$14,858,239.92, or \$1,125,309.76 above the budget goal.

Oppression fails to stop Gospel message

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Tom Edwards (not his real name) won't risk speaking the names of the friends he made while serving overseas as a missionary journeyman. He won't even mention the Muslim country in which he lived the past two years.

He wants to protect the identities of his Muslim friends, some of whom came to know Christ because of their friendship. Islamic law prescribes death for Muslims who leave Islam and though the government of the country in which Tom lived wouldn't directly enforce the sentence, it would look the other way while family members carried it out.

"If something bad happens to them," he said, "they know they are on their own, for the most part, except for God helping them."

Despite the danger, many men asked Tom for Bibles, often discreetly. "One guy told me specifically, 'You could get in trouble for giving me a Bible, but I still want one,'" he said.

Tom met students who were interested in practicing their English with a native speaker. Many young men were curious about Christ and the Bible. He found they loved to argue about all kinds of things.

Tom was not interested in pursuing apologetics. He wanted to meet people who already had seeds of faith planted in their lives by Christian radio broadcasts and believers they had met.

"I didn't want to waste my time arguing with people or just sharing with curious people," Tom said. "I started praying specifically that God would open their minds and that God would lead me specifically to guys in whose lives [he] was already working."

"When God did lead those people to me, it was easy. He had already opened their minds to hear about the gospel and glory of Christ."

While a volunteer group was prayer-walking in the area, Tom met a student he calls Paul. "I could tell from the start that this guy was different, very intelligent," Tom said. "He could process what I was telling him and he saw the parallels between different things and the symbolism in the stories. It could have been just because he was smart, and also because the Lord was working in his heart."

"I was able to talk with him about lots of things, especially the person and work of Jesus Christ and also God's plan through history."

One evening, after praying specifically for Paul's salvation, Tom went to meet him after work. Another friend was waiting there too. The friend and Paul had planned to study at

a professor's home for an English competition. "I chatted with his friend awhile," Tom remembered. "Then [Paul] came over and the first thing he said to me was, 'Tom, I'm interested in joining your party.'"

"I was excited because I knew that was sort of in code language. He was saying he wanted to accept Christ as his Savior."

Tom was exhilarated by Paul's statement, but he knew Paul already had an appointment with his friend. As the pair was preparing to leave, Paul's friend told him, "Why don't you go with Tom, and I'll go to the professor's house to make an excuse. I'll just tell him something so you can spend time with Tom, because he's leaving the country soon and he's your friend."

Tom and Paul walked to the beach for dinner and discussed a gospel tract. Tom

did not often give tracts to Muslims, but Tom knew Paul would not be turned off by the vocabulary because they had already talked about Christ.

"It seemed like he had already made the decision and this was kind of review," Tom said. "There on a bench overlooking the sea, he asked Jesus to come into his heart and save him from his sin."

"Now he is meeting with another Christian, a South African guy, and going through some discipleship things together."

"Our prayer is that he'll grow. That he'll learn to share his faith with others. That he won't be afraid to share his faith. That when he is persecuted — and he will be eventually — he'll come through it. That there will be some kind of Christian community for him."

Youth dies after church shooting

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP) — A teenager died September 5 after being shot by police the day before in the foyer of an Albuquerque Baptist church. Police said Dominic Montoya, 14, was shot when he pointed what turned out to be a fake handgun at the officers inside the Taylor Ranch Church in the northwestern part of the city.

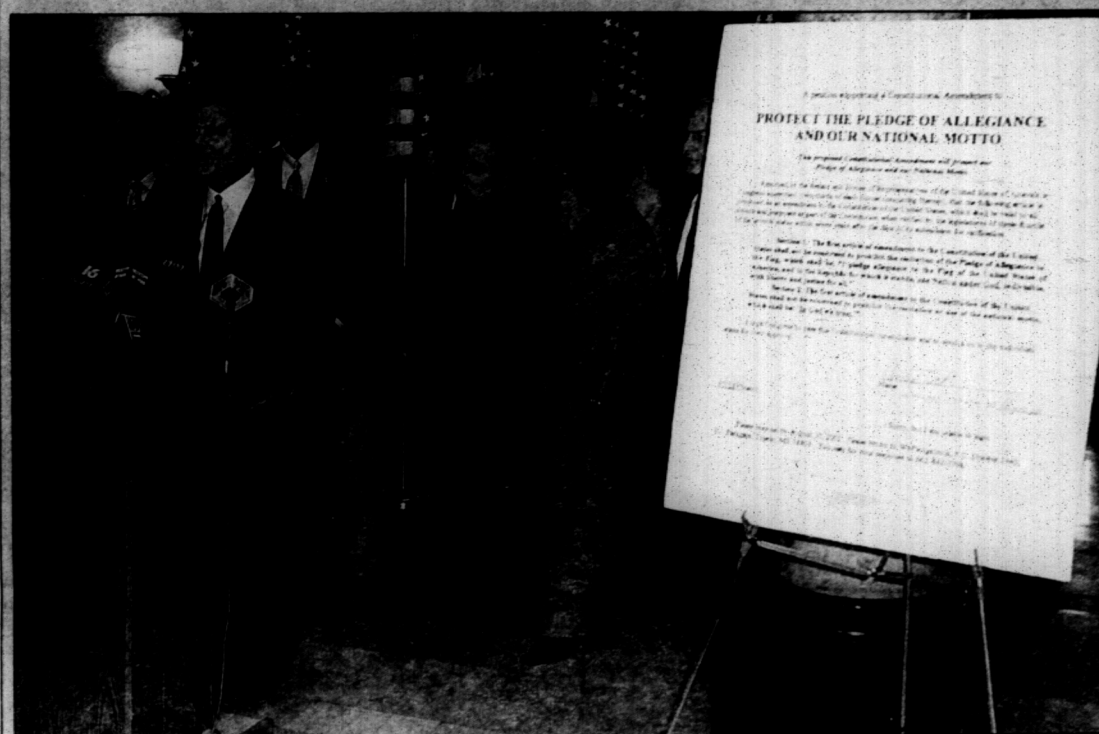
Police officers were called to the church after reports of a man with a gun. Choir rehearsal had just ended and a small group of young adults were talking when Montoya wandered into the church.

"He was shaken when he came in," said Timothy Marrow, pastor of Taylor Ranch Church and a trustee of LifeWay Christian Resources. "When he raised his shirt one of the church members saw that he was carrying a gun."

When the police arrived, the teenager went into the foyer where he was told to drop his weapon. He reportedly pointed the gun at a responding officer, who shot him twice in the side. Police are investigating the incident.

Marrow said he doesn't know why the young man came to the church. "That's a mystery," he said. "He wasn't a member of the church and no one recalled seeing him around." No church members were injured in the incident.

Pledge constitutional campaign started



Jim Futral (at podium), executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, expresses support for a newly-formed constitutional amendment campaign to protect the "One Nation under God," wording of the Pledge of Allegiance. Futral spoke during an August 26 news conference at the State Capitol in Jackson, called by Mississippi Lt. Governor Amy Tuck (over Futral's right shoulder) and attended by a number of state legislators. For more information on the campaign, contact Tuck's office at P.O. Box 1018, Jackson, MS 39215. Telephone: (601) 359-3200. E-mail: atuck@mail.senate.state.ms.us. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

BEAT Hunger weekend set for October 11-13

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — BEAT Hunger, or Believers Everywhere Attack Hunger, has moved from the youth ministry to the whole church.

Young people in various churches got involved in the Southern Baptist hunger emphasis when it was launched three years ago — and the rest of the congregation began to experience renewal, growth, and a healthy spirit.

From that initial effort, in which youth groups dedicated 24 hours to gaining an awareness of hunger issues and how they can plan to "attack" hunger in their communities and the world, churches are now being encouraged to follow young people's lead with a BEAT Hunger Weekend, Oct. 11-13.

Steve Nelson, director of hunger concerns for the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty

Commission (ERLC), said churches participating in the BEAT Hunger Weekend are being asked to address hunger needs in their town by hosting a canned food drive and/or serving at a local shelter, and having church members raise money in support of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) World Hunger Fund.

More than 460 groups have shown a strong interest in the weekend emphasis to benefit their local communities and the World Hunger Fund.

Although initiated months ago, the BEAT Hunger Weekend comes at a critical time: Giving to the SBC World Hunger Fund is down dramatically from previous years, Nelson said. Gifts to the fund were down more than 15% last year, or a \$1.5 million shortfall from 2000 to

2001. So far this year, giving has slipped another 11%.

Nelson is confident the BEAT Hunger Weekend campaign is off to a good start. A number of non-Southern Baptist churches have signed up to participate, and the weekend has been publicized at various youth conferences as well as the SBC annual meeting in St. Louis.

"Young people want to make a difference, and with the World Hunger Fund they're able to see that their contribution can make a life-saving difference," Nelson said.

Meals for homeless children in Uganda cost 12 cents apiece via the World Hunger Fund, Nelson noted. The average cost of meals served last year in the United States was 43 cents each. More than 3 million meals were served — and directly related to that in the

United States were more than 15,500 professions of faith.

"I want to see leaders grasp the reality that this type of ministry is very dear to God's heart," Nelson said. "It's very unlikely we'll see the revival we've been praying for without ministering to people in need. Proverbs 21:13 tells us that whoever stops their ears to the cry of the poor shall cry themselves and not be heard."

Registration for BEAT Hunger Weekend and resources to aid churches in the emphasis are available at www.beat-hungerweekend.com. Additional information is available from Nelson via e-mail to worldhungerfund@erlc.com. The money raised during the BEAT Hunger Weekend will benefit the World Hunger Fund and will be utilized in the U.S. and around the world.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Clear Branch Church, Wesson, had a commissioning service for Kerry and Amy Waldon on July 28. They accepted the call of God to go and minister as house parents to children at French Camp Academy in French Camp. Pictured (from left) are Kerry Waldon, Amy Waldon, and Wayne Moak, pastor.



Kerry & Amy Waldon and Wayne Moak

GAs of New Hope Church, Starkville, that spent the week of July 15-19 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton, (pictured from left, front row) are Angel Painter, Taylor Armstrong, Olivia Thomas, Kaitlin Thomas; (second row) Elisabeth Painter, Morgan Armstrong, Kay Moore, Jordan Andrews, and Morgan Coleman. Not pictured were Lisa Painter (leader), Teri Blake, helper, and Eddie Painter, pastor.



RAs of First Church McLaurin, Hattiesburg

Friendship Church, Columbus, held backyard Bible school on June 15. In addition to Bible stories, crafts, praise songs, and lunch, the children participated in a county fair where they played games and petted the farm animals.

Fifth Sunday Night Singing featuring the puppet ministry will be held at **Barnes Crossing Church, Saltillo**, at 6 p.m. on Sept. 29. J.D. Johnson is pastor.

Heucks Retreat Church, Brookhaven, will be having

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Saturday Nights in September worship services with Billy House as guest speaker. Services begin at 6 p.m. each Saturday evening. For more information, call the church office at (601) 835-1821.

Kolola Springs Church, Caledonia, will sponsor a back-to-school youth rally on Sept. 25 at 7 p.m.

The guest speaker will be Gary Permenter, and Chris Layton will lead in worship.

Phil Cross and Poet Voices will present their farewell tour at Northcrest Church, Meridian, at 7 p.m. on Sept. 19. For additional information, call (601) 482-3498.

Pope Church, Pope, will celebrate its 130th anniversary on Sept. 29. The program will begin at 10 a.m., followed by a covered dish lunch. Jimmy Bryant is pastor. For additional information, call the church at (601) 563-3271.

Macedonia Church, Brookhaven, will celebrate its sesquicentennial (150 years) anniversary on Oct. 6. Activities for the day will include Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; and potluck lunch in the Family Life Center at noon. A museum will be located in the old fellowship hall. Included in the museum will be a display of items placed in a time box located behind the corner stone of the sanctuary when it was built in 1968. David L. Sellers is pastor.

New Hope Church, Mt. Olive, will have a gospel sing with the New Life Quartet from Purvis, on Sept. 15, at 6 p.m.

Moorhead Church, Moorhead, will celebrate its 100th anniversary on Oct. 13. Charles Ray Sr., former pastor, will be the visiting minis-

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Backyard Bible Club participants of Friendship Church, Columbus

ter. Activities will include fellowship at 10 a.m.; worship service, 11 a.m.; and lunch in fellowship hall.

RAs of Byron Harbin Chapter, First Church, McLaurin, Hattiesburg, collected \$1,400 for their mission camps and over 100 cans of food for hunger relief. Paul Collier is director. The counselors are Kevin Mapp and Neil Hennis.

Darlove Church, Hollandale, recently presented a check to Ken West, missions director for Washington Baptist Association, in the amount of \$4,500 for definite needs of the children in the orphanages in the Ukraine. The money was raised from donations, special offerings, garage sales, and other activities. Pictured is West receiving a check from Cheryl Smyly, and the congregation of Darlove Church.



West and Smyly



GAs of New Hope Church, Starkville

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NAMES IN THE NEWS

Lauren Johnson, a member of Woodland Hills Church, Jackson, spent the summer singing with the Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir partially due to sponsorship from the Anna Lynn Osborne Memorial Fund established through the Mississippi Baptist Foundation. Johnson, a senior at Madison Central High School, recently sang for President Bush. She is pictured with John and Nell Osborne, parents of Anna-Lynn.



Nell Osborne, Lauren Johnson, and John Osborne

Kelly A. Travis is available for interim pastorate and pulpit supply. He has had 15 years of youth and education ministry experience and pastored for four years. His address is 803 Wisteria Lane, Picayune, MS 39466, or call (601) 772-9064 or 798-9614.



Senior Adults of Woodland Hills Church, Jackson

He may be contacted at (601) 938-7500, 482-4658 or 776-6050. Pictured with Dabbs (right) is Jim Smith, pastor of DeSoto Church.

Senior adults of **Woodland Hills Church, Jackson**, gathered for fellowship and prayer during a progressive luncheon.

Ingram Church, Baldwin, ordained Edward Murry to the ministry on July 14. He is minister of youth at Ingram Church. Pictured (from left) is Charlie Ransier, pastor of Ingram Church, Murry, and Mike Powell, pastor of Ellistown Church.

DeSoto Church, Shubuta, recently licensed **Drew Dabbs**, a senior at Mississippi College, to the ministry. He has served DeSoto Church for three years as youth pastor. Dabbs is available for supply, interim, Disciple Now Weekends, and True Love Waits.

Ransier, Murry, and Powell



Ransier, Murry, and Powell

REVIVAL DATES

First Church, Benndale: Sept. 16-20; 7 p.m.; Robert E. Phillips, guest speaker; Simon Erkhart, pastor.

Brewer, Richton: Sept. 15-20; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; John Henry, missions director for Greene and George counties, evangelist; Bill Ricks, Leakesville, music; Ken Ball, pastor.

Cedar View, Olive Branch: Oct. 6-9; Sunday, Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; noon meal; and worship, 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; preaching and music led by Walk Of Faith.

Springdale, West: Sept. 29-Oct. 4; Sunday, 11 a.m. and lunch; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Basil Wicker, Slaughter, La., evangelist; Robby Robertson, music; Mark Wicker, pastor.

Wayside, Vicksburg: Sept. 15-18; Sunday, 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Bud Dixon, Yazoo City, speaker; Bud Shiers, Vicksburg, music; Larry W. Haggard, pastor.

Macedonia, Meridian: Sept. 15-18; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Randall Creel, Forest, evangelist; Benny Egger, music; Jason Gross, pastor.

Oak Grove, Phoenix (Yazoo): Sept. 15-18; Sunday, Sunday School, 9 a.m., worship, 10 a.m., lunch, afternoon service, and 7:30 p.m. nightly; Billy Smith, Madison, guest speaker; Darby Combs is pastor.

Bayou View, Gulfport: Sept. 22-25; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 6:30 p.m.; Dean Register, Hattiesburg, evangelist; Jay Rustin, Bay Vista, Biloxi, worship leader.

Bethel, Drew: Sept 29-Oct 2; Sunday 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Randall Creel, Forest, evangelist; Larry Chouccoli, pastor.

Rawls Springs, Hattiesburg: Sept. 15-18; Sunday, 10 a.m., lunch, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon and 7 p.m.; Step Martin, evangelist; Ken Hedgepeth, music.

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(*I repent.*)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.
(*I believe in Jesus.*)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him.
(*I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.*)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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BAPTIST COLLEGE & SEMINARY NEWS

STAFF CHANGES



Costilow

J. B. Costilow will retire Sept. 15 after serving as pastor for 35 years at Liberty Church, Newton.

There will be a retirement reception honoring him at the church from 2 to 4 p.m.

Costilow is a graduate of Clarke College, Mississippi College, and received his master of theology from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He was ordained by First Church, Grenada, on Feb. 25, 1951. After seminary, Costilow became BSU director at Clarke College and remained in that position until 1990.

Before going to Liberty Church he pastored several churches including Smyrna Church, New Trenton, Indiana; Goodwater Church, Mehan Junction; and Bolton Church, Bolton. He has also served as interim pastor at a number of local churches.



Carpenter

Heather Carpenter, daughter of Bobby and Charlyn Carpenter of Dumas, and **Rebecca Dalton**, daughter of Jack Dalton

of New Albany and Becky Dalton of Clinton were each awarded a Sara Sunderman Campus Kappa Scholarship from the National Kappa Kappa Iota, the oldest professional organization for educators in the United States. Carpenter and Dalton are senior elementary education majors at Blue Mountain College. Carpenter was elected by the student body to serve as the 2002 Student Government President. Dalton was elected by her peers to serve as the 2002 President of Kappa Kappa Iota at Blue Mountain College.



Dalton



Boyer and Thompson

Joe Marsh, a sophomore at Northeast MS Community College (NEMCC), is the first-ever recipient of the Northeast

Baptist Student Union (BSU) scholarship in honor of Joe Cobb, who served as the BSU director for 28 years. For additional information on the scholarship fund, contact the BSU at P. O. Box 566, Booneville, MS 38829 or call Ed Earnest, associate director, at (662) 728-5409. The

e-mail address is www.NortheastBSU.org. Pictured (from left) are Cobb/Marsh, and Wayne Vandiver, BSU director.

Brandy Boyer (left) and **Jennifer Thompson** listen intently during the morning message brought by speaker Gregg Matte, during Collegiate Week 2002, held at the Life Way Glorieta Conference Center near Santa Fe, N. M. Boyer, from Hattiesburg, attends Meridian Community College, Meridian. Thompson, from Sumrall, attends Jones Junior College, Ellisville.



Cobb, Marsh, and Vandiver

First Church, Lucedale, has called **Travis Dunlap** as minister to students. A native of Pearl, he received his education at Hinds Community College and Mississippi College. His previous place of service was Colonial Heights Church, Jackson.



Jones and Gandy

Donnie Jones has accepted the call as full time minister of youth and children at Liberty Church, Waynesboro. He has been

serving as part time minister of youth during the past year while teaching in the school system. Jones is a graduate of William Carey College. Pictured (from left) with Jones is Phillip Gandy, pastor.

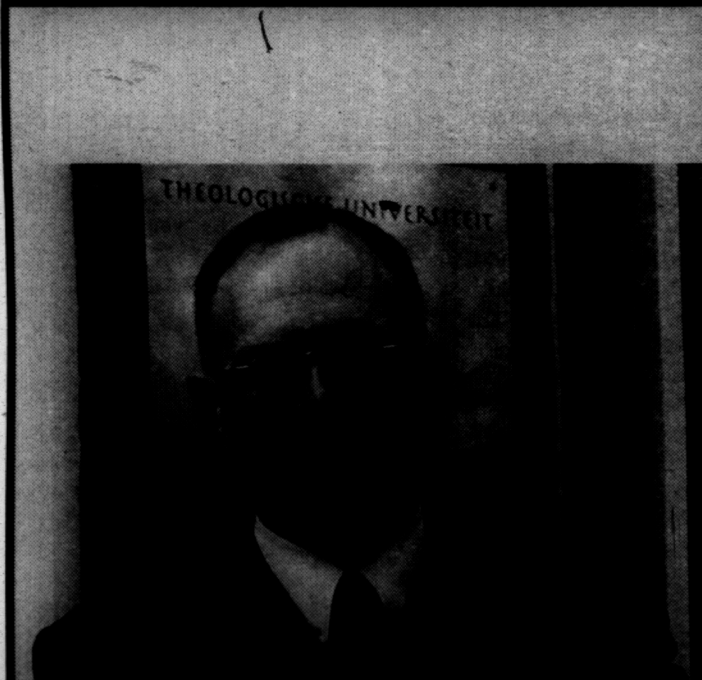


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LIFE CHAINS COMING

Editor:

On October 6, metro Jackson pro-lifers are making plans to line busy streets in the area holding signs and praying for an end to abortion. Last year almost 700 participated in the Jackson/Ridgeland and Clinton chains, and more are expected this year because a chain has been added in Rankin County.

Life Chain is the one pro-life activity that centers on the church and prayer to end abortion. Many pro-life emphases are educational with medical and psychological facts being presented, but this great event is unapologetically religious and spiritual.

Right to Life of Jackson (RTLJ) is coordinating the metro area Life Chains and providing signs for the participants to hold. Churches and individuals can join the chain by calling (601) 956-8636, e-mailing rtlj@jam.rr.com, or by showing up on the day of the chains. All three chains run from 2-3 p.m. on October 6, with the Clinton chain meeting on Highway 80 near the old Wal-Mart; Jackson/Ridgeland/Madison on County Line Road; and Rankin County on Highway 80 in the Crossgates area.

Life Chains will also be conducted across the state with several chains on the coast, as well as chains in Hattiesburg, Columbus, Forest, Houston, Vaiden, and Tupelo. Pat Cartrette, RTLJ Jackson

MUCH DARKNESS

Editor:

It appears that in this new Age of Enlightenment there is much darkness! The terrorists have cast a forbidding shadow over our land that has revealed the corrupt nature of mankind. America has chosen gold over God, greed over grace, and machines over man. We declared God dead in the Sixties and dismissed him from the classroom, courtroom, and workplace. The counterculture revolution rejected the authority of God, government, and

the Greatest Generation. The Wizards of Wall Street have revealed our natural greed and our mania over materialism.

We will be chasing terrorists until Kingdom come! Only by the grace of God can we survive the fury of evil. Satan's power is great. His disguises are legion — Stalin, Saddam, Socialism — as he hides behind the veil of religion.

The twentieth century was billed as the Century of Light. We pride ourselves as the most educated and enlightened society on earth, yet we are forever waging undeclared war in the name of justice. Our young people have become cannon fodder ever since the forgotten war of Korea.

Dr. Livingstone brought the Light to darkest Africa. Who is going to carry the Light to the darkness of the Middle East? No longer can our godless government and society of excesses claim to be the hope of the world. A recent religious survey revealed that 85% of the Christian churches in America are in decline. Best we hurry! Our light is fading fast.

Paul Lycette
Jackson

GIANT IS GONE

Editor:

On July 19, James Donald (Don) Stanfill went to be with the Lord. Following a six-month battle with cancer, Don went into a coma Friday evening and quietly slipped into the presence of the Lord. He is survived by his wife Doris, his son Donnie, two lovely daughters Tera and Lucy, plus five wonderful grandchildren.

Don pastored churches in Mississippi and Arkansas, and for the last 16 years served as associational missions director (AMD) for Lafayette/Marshall Counties. He was a true missionary. Every church he served gave generously to the Cooperative Program, the association, and the home and foreign mission offerings.

During his tenure as AMD, nine churches were added to the roll, plus massive increases in gifts of the churches to the associ-

ation, state convention, and special offerings. For ten years mission teams have gone to South America and locations here at home. He led in the construction of the associational office building for Marshall County.

Don loved his churches and his pastors, as evidenced by the presence of over 60 pastors and denominational workers at his funeral. He was my friend for 47 years. A giant in missions is gone from our midst. He will be missed.

Jon F. Meek, interim AMD
Lafayette Association
Oxford

ANNIVERSARIES SET

Editor:

Pope Church, Pope, will celebrate its one hundred thirtieth anniversary on September 29. The pastor and congregation extend a special invitation to all former pastors, members, and friends of the church to attend. The program will begin at 10 a.m., followed by a covered dish lunch as only the ladies of Pope Church can prepare. There will be no afternoon or evening services.

Former pastors and special guests will have an opportunity to share during the planned two-hour program. Nursery care is available for small children. For more information, contact the church at (601) 563-3271.

Jimmy Bryant, pastor
Pope Church, Pope

Editor:

Macedonia Church in Brookhaven will be celebrating its sesquicentennial anniversary on October 6. The day will begin with Sunday School at 9:15 a.m. An exciting morning worship service will follow at 10:30 a.m. A potluck lunch will be served in the Family Life Center at noon.

A museum of old things relating to the church will be located in the old fellowship hall. Included in the museum will be a display of items placed in a time box located behind the cornerstone of the sanctuary when it was built in 1968.

The pastor, staff, members, and friends would like to invite

all former members, pastors, and staff to attend. The church can be contacted at 1230 Macedonia Road NW, Brookhaven, MS 39601. Telephone: (601) 833-6760.

David Sellers, pastor
Macedonia Church
Brookhaven

Editor:

West Jackson Street Church, Tupelo, will celebrate its fortieth anniversary on October 6. The special worship service will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 12 noon. Past members of the church are invited to the celebration. It would be great to renew friendships and worship the Lord Jesus as we celebrate the past and look to the future.

Bert Harper, pastor
West Jackson St. Church
Tupelo

Editor:

Moorhead Church, Moorhead, will celebrate its one hundredth anniversary on October 13. Former pastor Charles Ray Sr. will be the visiting minister. Former members and friends are invited to attend the celebration.

Fellowship will begin at 10 a.m. The morning service will begin at 11 a.m., followed by a luncheon in the fellowship hall. The program will include two resolutions presented to the families of two deceased deacons: C.E. (Pete) Wood Sr., and James W. Cartwright. For more information, contact me at (662) 246-5336.

Annette Honeycutt
Moorhead

Editor:

Blythe Creek Church, Mathiston, will be hosting its one hundred twenty-fifth anniversary celebration on October 20. We will have a full day of activities beginning at 10 a.m. All former pastors are given a special invitation to attend and share their memories during the afternoon service that begins at 1:30 p.m. Former members are also invited to attend. They may contact the church at Route 2, Box 298, Mathiston, MS 39752. Telephone: (662) 263-4886.

Sandra Williams
Mathiston



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

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7:00 p.m. "Time of Reflection and Celebration" featuring several former pastors, staff, and families. Sunday's guest speaker is George Johnson. Johnny Sykes is pastor.

HOME COMING - Leland, Lakeview Baptist Church 50th Anniversary Sunday, September 22, 2002; services begin at 10:30 a.m., dinner and afternoon singing, S.B. Boyette, Pastor.

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Homecomings

First, Benndale: Sept. 15; 11 a.m.; covered dish lunch; afternoon singing with the New River Boys; Pat McNair, guest speaker; Simon Erkhart, pastor.

Bigbee, Amory: Sept. 15; 10:30 a.m.; 11 a.m. service; Truman Carter, speaker; noon meal; 1:30 p.m., singing with Saved by Grace; Tommy Whaley, pastor.

Friendship, McComb: 185th year; Sept. 21 and 22; Saturday, 6:30 p.m.; Sunday, 10:45 a.m., noon meal in fellowship hall; Gordon Shamburger, Clinton, and Troy Bankston, McComb, guest speakers, and Larry McEwen, Slidell, La., music; LaVerne Summerlin, pastor.

Military, Sumrall: Sept. 29; services, 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.; dinner will be served in fellowship hall; George Aultman, guest speaker; Joey Wyatt, music; Mike Aultman, pastor.

Damascus, Hazlehurst: 178th year; Sept. 22; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; Luther Farley, Cleveland, Tenn., message; lunch in fellowship hall following morning services; cemetery meeting, 1 p.m.; followed by afternoon concert by the Farley Family.

North Morton, Morton: Sept. 15; 10:30 a.m.; dinner followed by afternoon singing with Higher Ground; Bobby Wagner, speaker.

Van safety issue heating up for churches

By Lacey Thompson
Louisiana Baptist Message

First in a series

Everything is set for the summer mission trip — the kids are all gathered around the van. The luggage is all stowed in the small trailer behind the van and on the van's rooftop rack.

At 6:12 a.m., the van leaves the church parking lot, less than 15 minutes behind schedule, headed for service — and possibly an accident.

The scenario is harsh, and some would say unnecessary. However, others disagree, citing recent advisories about 15-passenger vans, the same type used by many churches.

In a word, the advisories say beware. "Research has showed (sic) that 15-passenger vans have a rollover risk that is similar to other light trucks and vans when carrying a few passengers," a recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration advisory noted.

"However, the risk of rollover increases dramatically as the number of occupants increases from fewer than five to more than 10," adds the agency, which released the rare advisory in both the spring of 2001 and 2002.

"In fact, 15-passenger vans (with 10 or more occupants) had a rollover rate in single vehicle crashes that is nearly three times the rate of those that were lightly loaded."

That is not just a federal agency talking. Experience confirms the danger. Indeed, in a three-month period at the start of 2000, six 15-passenger van accidents occurred involving college sports teams, with a number of students killed or seriously injured. In all but one of the accidents, the vans rolled.

From 1990-2000, there was a total of 388 rollovers involving 15-passenger vans, with 268 of those single-vehicle crashes. All in all, 558 fatalities were recorded, including 424 in the single-vehicle rollovers.

Nevertheless, use of 15-passenger vans remains popular. Some statistics report there are 1.4 million of them currently registered in the United States. To be honest, they are driven millions of miles each year without incident, used as airport/hotel shuttle vehicles, by scout groups, by day-care centers, by government, by disabled groups — and by churches.

Indeed, in one recent Church Executive magazine survey, only 30 percent of churches said they did not own a 15-passenger van. The remaining 70 percent said they did own such a vehicle, although 31.4% said they were looking to phase out their use.

Nevertheless, there are a lot of church vans on the road — and while a majority of users never experience a problem, some congregations have suffered through tragic accidents, Church Executive reports in its June 2002 issue.



SAFETY HAZARD? — Government officials and insurance companies have begun to question the safety and stability of 15-passenger vans like this wrecked model in an undated photograph. (Photo courtesy of the Louisiana Baptist Message)

The Church Executive article opens by recounting three such crashes dating back to 1995. All involved at least one fatality and numerous serious injuries.

"From 1995 to 2001, Church Mutual customers suffered more than 32,500 automobile accidents," the article reports. "Twenty of those involved 15-passenger vans and resulted in 17 fatalities and 68 serious injuries. ...Half of the 20 accidents were caused by tire failure. In many of the accidents, untrained or young drivers were involved, and most of those injured or killed were not wearing seat belts."

Are 15-passenger vans really that unsafe? Well, yes and no.

It seems the blame lies in two places — actually — in the vans themselves and in the fact that many are operated without taking some careful precautionary steps.

As for the vans themselves, their design creates a problem. Most models use the

same wheel base as a car, while extending the back of the vehicle.

Thus, when the van is fully loaded, there is quite a bit of weight behind the rear axle. Indeed, many models have four passengers sitting behind that axle. Put a small trailer behind the van, and the matter may become even more of an issue.

That creates concern number one — a tendency for the rear of the van to swing out when a sudden swerve is made, thus creating a control problem for the driver.

In addition, the vans are top heavy, giving them a high center of gravity. The more fully they are loaded, the more top heavy they grow. Luggage placed on top of the vans only exacerbates the problem.

That creates concern number two — and adds to the tendency for the vans to roll over when an abrupt move is made, such as a swerve back onto a road or following a tire blowout.

Of course, rollovers do not occur often, compared to other types of crashes — accounting for only about 300,000 out of 9.5 million crashes. However, they also account for about 32% of all fatal crashes — and in a 15-passenger van, rollovers can be deadly.

"I don't think a vehicle with their rollover rate should be on the road," emphasizes Milt Chase, an engineer who helped design the computer software that Ford uses to test rollover resistance on vehicles.

Chase made his comment on a recent "60 Minutes II" television segment on the dangers of 15-passenger vans.

The television report acknowledged what other observers agree on as well — the vans are not unstable under normal conditions.

Even the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says there is nothing inherently wrong with the vehicles. Indeed, they have a rollover rate less than that of light trucks and sports utility vehicles, when lightly loaded.

Problems come when the vans are fully loaded and sudden or emergency maneuvers are made.

The Baptist Message is the newsjournal of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

Churches offered tips for using 15-passenger vans

Observers offer a host of precautionary steps persons can take regarding the use of 15-passenger vans to transport groups. The following compiled list includes suggestions from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Christian Ministry Resources and other sources:

- Drive with fewer than 10 occupants. In fatal, single-vehicle crashes, 15-passenger vans rolled over 85% of the time when loaded with 10 or more occupants, compared to 38% of the time when loaded with less than 10 persons.
- Seat occupants from the front of the van rearward.
- Require each occupant to wear a seat belt at all times. The van owner should adopt a written seat belt policy, and the dri-

vers should be informed that they are personally responsible for enforcing it.

- Load absolutely nothing on the van roof.
- Use well-rested van drivers. Drivers should drive cautiously. Maintain a speed that is safe under the conditions and be especially careful on rural and curved roads.
- Inspect tires monthly to check for wear and proper inflation. A 15-passenger van's tendency to roll over increases dramatically during emergency maneuvers, such as a panic response to a tire blowout.
- If the van's wheels drop off the road, gradually reduce speed and steer back onto the road when it is safe to do so.

- Use only drivers who have received specific training on the use of 15-passenger vans. Several options are available, including a van driver certification course offered by the National Safety Council. This training should be repeated every three years.
- Keep the van's gas tank as full as possible on trips.
- Prohibit the van from being driven in excess of 60 miles per hour.
- Prohibit the towing of heavy or multi-axle trailers or another vehicle.
- Prohibit the use of any van after midnight and before 6 a.m. Overnight trips will be an option only if a professional transportation company is used that provides both the vehicle and driver.

- Prohibit the use of cellular phones under any circumstances by the driver while operating the vehicle. However, a cell phone should be on board for use in emergencies.
- Require all drivers to be approved pursuant to church policy. Drivers must have the appropriate class of license, and the church should conduct a check of each driver's record for traffic offenses or license restrictions to determine if the driver is suitable. This should be updated annually.
- Drivers should be prohibited from driving for more than 10 hours in any 24-hour period (unless a shorter limitation is provided under an applicable law or regulation).

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

God is Patient

Jonah 1:1 - 4:11; II Peter 3:1 - 18

By Gene Neal

Dear God, please give me patience, and give it to me right now! How many of us have at least thought it if not actually prayed it? Patience is a difficult topic for many people due to the fact that it is a virtue few have in abundance. Thankfully, it is a virtue that our heavenly Father does have in abundance. God showed great patience with mankind in the years before the Flood. He could have judged the world for the wickedness he saw; yet he held back his wrath and sent Noah to preach to the people. Another instance of God's great patience is found in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. God patiently waited while Abraham interceded for the cities, willing to spare them all

had he found ten righteous people in Sodom.

The patience of God is again seen in the book of Jonah. The entire book of Jonah is a wonderful lesson about the power, plan, and patience of God, showing us a loving God that has all of creation at his disposal. Notice the number of elements he chooses to use to get Jonah's attention and speak to him. As we remember, Jonah was called by God to preach to the wicked Assyrian city of Nineveh. Jonah simply refused, ran from God, boarded a ship, encountered a storm, was tossed overboard, took a three-day cruise in the belly of a great fish, repented, and was spit out onto dry land. (Now go read Jonah 1 and 2 for the unabridged ver-



Neal

sion.) We continue to see God's great power as he blesses the preaching of Jonah resulting in a city-wide revival. Later, God once again uses his creation to teach Jonah another lesson. Rather than rejoicing over the saving power of God and the fact that he was able to see it first hand,

Jonah became bitter and pouted that he didn't get his way. Jonah could have easily joined the ranks of those across the years who have believed that God, church, and all that happens revolves around what we want rather than embracing the truth that everything is about God and what honors him.

The book of Jonah also clearly teaches us about the plan of God. In Luke 19:10 Jesus stated, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." (NIV) Jesus also said that he simply did what he saw his Father doing. (John 5:19) One of the times Jesus saw his Father seeking

and saving the lost was in the book of Jonah. The final verse, Jonah 4:11, makes it very clear that God's ultimate goal in dealing with humanity is to see lost people saved. Ezekiel 18:23 and 32 reinforce this idea. Another part of God's plan is that he desires to use believers to reach out to the lost. Amazingly, the God who can use the wind, a fish, and a worm would prefer to use us to accomplish his master plan to save the world. As his children and members of his family, it only makes good sense that we would adopt his plan for the world.

There is a common thread that runs through the entire book of Jonah. In the midst of his power and plan we see his patience. God showed merciful patience with Jonah in spite of his disobedience. Think of the trouble God went to in order to get Jonah's attention. God again was patient with Jonah when Jonah threw a tantrum after the revival. God was gra-

ciously patient with the people of Nineveh by sending Jonah their way and allowing them the time and opportunity to repent.

While we can be thankful that God was patient with Jonah and the people of Nineveh, we can be more thankful that he is patient with people today. II Peter 3:9 tells us that God's patience is the very thing preventing universal destruction and final judgment. This world is not held together by our environmental policies, protection groups, military might, scientific discoveries, or anything else of human design. Time continues simply because God is patient! He wants to provide more time for lost people to repent and turn to him. He also wants to provide more time for believers to have the privilege and joy of sharing the message of his love, forgiveness, and salvation.

Neal is pastor at First Church, Quitman.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Believing in Jesus

John 2

By Ginger Caughman

A wedding invitation stands out from the rest of the mail. An oversize creamy-white envelope, the address beautifully lettered. Often a special postage stamp with some symbol of love is attached to the top right corner. Inside the envelope is another envelope with the invitation to a wedding covered with thin paper to protect the words. You read the lovely words. You are invited...

Every wedding is special as a man and a woman join two lives to form one. A wedding does not make a marriage, but is a distinct beginning as vows are pledged before God and witnesses. God ordained marriage and cares about each new family unit formed in a marriage. Family and friends

witnessing the ceremony and sharing in the reception have a responsibility to pray for the couple and encourage the marriage in the days ahead.

You are invited this Sunday to a very special wedding described in chapter two of John. The wedding in Cana of Galilee was made even more special because of the presence of invited guests, Jesus, his disciples, and his mother. During the reception following the ceremony, Jesus preformed his first miracle. Though this lesson focus is on that miracle of turning water into wine at the wedding feast, do read the entire chapter. The lesson emphasizes that real life involves placing one's faith in Jesus. This week consider this



Caughman

question: How do you express your faith in Jesus Christ?

1. Learn About Jesus. Read John 2: 1-4.

Mary knew a great deal about Jesus based on her relationship with him and the information the angels gave her. (See Luke 1:26-38) But like the disciples and like us, she still had more to learn. It's

important to understand that Jesus was not showing disrespect in his response to Mary. "Dear woman" can be a term of endearment. When Mary told Jesus about the shortage of wine, he indicated he was looking only to God for guidance in his life.

Do you know more about Jesus than you did this time last year? We need to continue to discover the importance of doing what God wants for our lives.

2. Look for Jesus' Power. Read John 2: 5-10.

Mary was not rebuked by Jesus response, for she told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you" (v.5). The miracle of Jesus was evidence of his power and

thus his deity. Jesus was helping the host who had run out of refreshments. Jesus never used his power for display.

Are you looking for God at work around you? As we learn more about Jesus, we will see evidence of his power.

3. Express Faith in Jesus. Read John 2:11.

Believing in Jesus is essential is obtaining real life. The disciples had expressed their faith in Jesus Christ before the miracle at the wedding. (Some examples are John 1: 37, 39-43, 49-50.) Thus the expression of faith in verse 11 was not the first such expression by all of the disciples. It was important for them as it is for us, to regularly express our faith both verbally and in our lifestyle.

You can know about Jesus and not know him personally. Being a Christian is a daily relationship with the living Lord Jesus.

As the disciples witnessed Jesus display the power of God, they more and more understood the purpose and mission of Jesus. Remember is a word that God repeated through his

servants throughout the Old Testament. Remember that just as the miracles in Egypt showed God's power, so also, the miracles of Jesus showed the power of God.

Have you struggled with the truth about Jesus? Real life is offered to all on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ. Those who hear about Jesus have to decide if they will exercise faith in him. "For some putting their faith in Jesus Christ is difficult. They want real life but are not willing to make a genuine commitment of faith in Jesus. Only a mustard seed-sized faith is required. As you learn more and more about Jesus and His power, choose to express your faith in him. Repent of your sin of selfishness, make a decision to receive Christ, and express your faith in Jesus. Like Jesus' disciples, our faith in him will grow as we continually trust him. The Church is the bride of Christ. Be a part of the real life he promises. Believe Jesus!

Caughman is a member of First Church, Magee.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,



no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

Special ATS treat in store for Halloweeners

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Trick-or-treaters will get more than a handful of candy this Oct. 31 when they knock on the door of someone participating in the American Tract Society (ATS) Halloween evangelism effort.

According to the Barna Research Group, 85% of all Christians make their commitment to Christ between the ages of four and 14, Southern said, underscoring the importance of Halloween evangelism tracts as evangelism tools.

The kit includes tracts designed with pictures of kids dressed up as American real-life heroes such as a nurse, a firefighter, a doctor, a businesswoman, and even a ballerina.

"We see the heroes and rescue aspects of the kit especially appropriate this year because America and America's children have realized heroism on a new level after 9/11," Southern said.

In addition to the tracts, individually wrapped taffy candy, colorful stickers and clear sealable bags — enough for 31 children — are included. For youth and adults, single tracts called

"Separating Halloween Fact from Folklore" and "Reaching Kids on Halloween" are also in each kit. The ATS website is www.atstracts.org.

Samaritan's Purse is providing inserts for the ATS Halloween kits with order forms to participate in the ministry's Operation Christmas Child. Samaritan's Purse, led by Franklin Graham, has delivered gift-filled Christmas shoeboxes and demonstrated God's love to more than 18 million children in 110 countries.

"Samaritan's Purse is excited to work with the American Tract Society to impact the lives of boys and girls here in the United States," Graham said.

ATS, based in Garland, Texas, has been the nation's hallmark publisher of religious tracts since 1825, and the Halloween tracts have been popular for many years.

At the Dallas-area Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, a Halloween night festival spreads across 10 acres of the church campus and draws a crowd of more than 20,000 each year. Children's leader Diana Pendley called it one of their biggest and busiest evangelism outreaches all year.

Each guest who registers to win door prizes or participates in any of the more than 100 carnival and inflatable games, rock climbing, petting zoo, and food booths gets a bag of candy and an ATS Halloween tract.

"We use tracts because they are short and easy to read and share the gospel message effectively," Pendley said in an ATS news release. "They go home with people and speak to them in a voice that reaches beyond our voices in the quiet times when they need to hear the message most."

Joey Hancock, director of ATS' church ministry division, said churches across the country are becoming more active in Halloween evangelism efforts each year.

"Halloween is the only time of the year that the people are coming to our doors expecting treats, and Christians are learning, when an opportunity like this knocks, not to waste it," he said. "Churches are using the tracts like 24-hour evangelists, clearly painting the gospel and giving folks something to think back on the days after Halloween."

As a new feature this year, Halloween e-tracts also can be sent from the ATS www.atstracts.org website.

Christians in the United States order nearly three million Halloween outreach items from ATS each year during the six-week countdown to Oct. 31, Southern said.

"As a kid, I never once heard about Jesus from my friends or neighbors unless it was when they cursed using his name," Southern said. "Fortunately my parents told me about Jesus. Many today have no one in their lives to tell them about Christ, unless the followers of Christ are willing to be missionaries in their own communities."

"When, but Halloween, do we have more folks coming up to our doors? All we have to do is answer with more than they are asking — a Gospel tract and a candy treat."



"ATS' newest 'Halloween Rescue Kit' gives Christians a tool to rescue Halloween this year with the sweet taste of salvation spelled out in treats and gospel tracts designed specifically for Halloween handout," said Dan Southern, president of ATS.

Parents group warns of slipping TV standards

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — An entertainment watchdog organization's list of the 10 best and 10 worst programs on broadcast television may soon need revising as network executives reportedly are considering further testing the limits of decency.

The Parents Television Council (PTC) placed Doc of the Pax Network at the top of its 10 best list and named Buffy the Vampire Slayer of the United Paramount Network as the worst of the worst.

Six of the 10 best shows were new. That fact, plus the renewal for a new season of most of the 10 best programs, prompted PTC President Brent Bozell to say, "It appears that the networks are finally starting to listen to the collective voice of parents who want to sit down with their children and enjoy high-quality, family-friendly programming in prime time."

The rankings, however, demonstrate "the networks have a long way to go before parents can be assured that their children will not be bombarded with filth during prime time," Bozell acknowledged in a written statement. "The networks irresponsibly market these adult-oriented programs to younger audiences, and they refuse to consider the

consequences of what happens when children are continuously exposed to lewd and offensive programming."

That kind of programming may grow even worse when the new season opens this fall. Network executives are demonstrating a willingness to push the decency envelope even further in the wake of such new cable TV programs as The Shield and The Osbournes, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

While cable premium channel HBO has produced in recent years shows marked by sex, violence, obscenities, and profanities, networks such as FX and MTV have been successful at pushing basic cable's limits in the last year. This summer, reality programs such as NBC's Dog Eat Dog and CBS' Big Brother III have further tested broadcast television's standards, according to The Reporter.

A recent study, however, may discourage advertisers from sponsoring programs containing sex and violence. Research by two Iowa State University psychology professors showed that people recalled advertisements shown during "neutral" programs better than those telecast during sexually explicit or violent programming.

Viewers of "neutral" shows demonstrated a better memory both immediately after the programs and a day later, according to an article published in the Journal of Applied Psychology. This finding proved true of men and women of all ages and regardless of whether they liked violent or sexually explicit programs. Paxson Communications Corp., which owns the Pax Channel, funded the study.

The PTC's 10 best list of broadcast programs after Doc consisted, in order, of Touched by an Angel (CBS), Sabrina, the Teenage Witch (Warner Brothers), 7th Heaven (WB), Baby Bob (CBS), Smallville (WB), Reba (WB), The Ponderosa (Pax), George Lopez (ABC), and Bernie Mac (Fox).

The shows in the numbers five to 10 slots were all new. The inclusion of Sabrina demonstrates the existence of some occultic themes does not automatically disqualify a program from PTC's positive rankings, and some of the programs listed also contain explicit language and sexual situations.

After Buffy the Vampire Slayer, the PTC's 10 worst were, in order, Off Centre (WB), Will and Grace (NBC), Friends (NBC), WWE Smackdown (UPN), Big Brother II (CBS),

CSI (CBS), Temptation Island II (Fox), That '70s Show, (Fox) and Boston Public (Fox).

The PTC's broadcast TV rankings, which were released Aug. 22, followed by only three weeks its first ratings of cable television's best and worst original series.

The cable rankings constitute a "wake-up call," PTC's Bozell said in a written release. "Basic cable is worse than ever before. In a tasteless attempt to boost ratings, basic cable has begun to target children with programs that clearly push the envelope."

More than 75% of American homes had basic cable as of two years ago, according to PTC.

The worst programs in PTC's cable list, beginning with No. 1, were The Shield, Undressed (MTV), South Park (Comedy Central), The Real World (MTV), WWE Raw (The National Network), The Man Show (Comedy Central), Celebrity Deathmatch (MTV), The Andy Dick Show (MTV), Witchblade (Turner Network Television), and The Osbournes.

Editor's note: The Baptist Record does not necessarily endorse the television shows listed by PTC, but merely provides this article as a resource for parents and television viewers in general.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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ZST TMAS XF ZST

PJAU'S, MKU ZST

COPKTF ZSTATJC; ZST

NJAPU, MKU ZSTL ZSTL

ZSMZ UNTPP ZSTATXK.

VFMPHF

ZNTKZL-CJOA: JKT

Clue: S=H

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Eight:Twenty-Nine.